

EASTHAM HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2020-2021

MINUTES – 13 January 2021

Note: Meeting was conducted via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions.

ATTENDEES: Kate Berg (chair), Marcia Bromley, Felice Coral, Stella Edmondson, Beverly Hobbs, Dilys Smith

The meeting was called to order at 6:59 PM.

Minutes from 1/6/21 were reviewed and accepted.

General Discussion on Proposed Budget

Per discussion with town officials, Kate reported that the Town has determined to maintain level funding for the upcoming Human Services budget compared the prior year's 2.5% increase. The Town has included a Family Support Package & Pre-School tuition in the upcoming Tow budget. The Navigator program remains separately funded. Several organizations have reported increased donations during this pandemic year and thus were not making increased requests from EHSAC. The budget under consideration thus reflects level funding, with a bottom-line reduction of \$1925.

- ECEC application was received.

Melanie Braverman-Alzheimer's Support Group

- Much has happened in the past year, with services becoming fully remote since March: clinicians working from home; development of a mobile database, Zoom proficiency, phone calls to clients/caregivers, caregiver planning ongoing, with information provided to EMTS. All services are now offered online. 1:1 training for all staff and volunteers is ongoing.
- There are 45 support groups offered per month, online: for patients and caregivers, loss support, educational programs, and more.
- A free, virtual congress was presented in August; 1200 people attended on Zoom; CEUs were offered to a national and international group; 1000+ individuals received free training from the 2019 congress.
- US Senators attention: Senator Markey appeared live at the conference, & Senator Warren provided taped remarks. ASG has begun have national influence, and plans are underway to replicate these services for other communities.
- Partnerships continue with other entities, including schools, Councils on Aging, other public service and voluntary organizations.
- Increased usage of online and telephone services, due to loss of in-person services. Eastham CoA has offered outstanding support during this period.

- Increased number of services: COVID conversations (eg., staff in chronic care facilities, 3-session support program); increased educational offerings, including-new single seminars, e.g. on driving, isolation & loneliness; and expansion of staff teaching activities.
- Nightly eblasts are sent, to increase the sense of community and information, and include presentations by a public health nurse, joke nights, cultural programming, and more.
- Robust volunteer program for Alzheimer clients themselves: envelope stuffing etc., overseen by a Volunteer Coordinator; these activities encourage retired professionals who still want to contribute despite their limitations. Activities include: birdhouse painting, 75+ fundraiser, assisted living activities, and more. Community visibility of the Support Group and its clients is thus increased in a positive way.
- Conference attendees now use services online: staff, families and other clients have become more racially and culturally integrated due to this additional participation by a an enlarging population.
- Other programs include: Arts and Ideas at CCMOA and Cotuit Center for the Arts; Cape Cod Chamber Orchestra has presented-conducting workshops & concerts via Zoom; potential for other virtual activities, including the Eastham CoA Chorus with children; sends links; trivia sessions with videos, sing-alongs, etc.
- A ongoing challenge is finding financial support for tech support and equipment.
- Follow-up phone contact with previous clients/caregivers is ongoing, with new social worker and volunteers.
- A cost of \$6000 for 50 Eastham clients was spent in the second quarter. Online services permit more efficient use of funds.

Outer Cape Health Services: Andy Lowe, Leo Blandford

Andy Lowe:

- Focus on service to patients: switched to 100% telehealth in March; same number of patients this year as in previous years.
- Telehealth worked well for behavioral health, with fewer missed appointments.
- Reopened June/July, 2/3 of appointments were in person; 50% now during second surge.
- Tents have been set up to do testing at both sites: 6500 tests have been performed to date, low rates of positivity in summer, but are rising now.
- Vaccinations became available in December, majority of staff have received vaccination.
- Remaining vaccinations will be offered to patient-facing providers in the region and to first-responders; guidance by state and county is followed.
- Continuing regular efforts plus pilot programs: distribution of mobile phones for those who don't have them; remote patient monitoring for BP management, via cell signal.

Leo Blandford:

- Increased use of telehealth extended into Navigator program, with a focus on social determinants of health: there has been an uptick in needs for food, financial, social services, housing assistance.
- Identification of gaps in care and barriers to services, with new collaborations with other organizations: HAC partnership; Cape Cod Health Care provides-prepared meals for diabetes management, as part of a pilot program to support medical needs.
- 70 new patient referrals annually and ongoing patients, who are referred by primary care providers; police, CoAs, etc. Of note, residents do not need to be patients of OCHS. OCHS is a resource for all Eastham residents. In particular, there are 3 providers of psychiatric services, with a waiting period of 3 weeks, a much shorter period than average on Cape.
- Expanding behavioral health and substance abuse services, structured outpatient programs have been based out of Hyannis/Orleans. New certification has been obtained to implement new services within OCHS, eg. A post-detox program to support reintegration into community; hiring of a new recovery coach focused on peer support and lived-experience; may facilitate AA or other groups, but is integrated into OCHS network; also offers an office-based addiction treatment program-for patients dependent upon opioids, alcohol.
- Community health worker shortage: OCHS is collaborating with Cape Cod Community College to support development of 4C's certification. 4 interns currently in behavioral health program to see patients as part of supervised training. This program requires a high school diploma plus 80-hour course over a 3-month period, providing a-broad overview of community health: med terminology, community engagement, geriatric mental health; will also include a 12-month training series, team-building, with a focus on the Outer Cape, other agencies, COAs, police, and appropriate resource allocation. Trauma-informed care program will include: influence on health of developmental, adolescence/childhood events, etc. Therapeutic rapport to be established. Efforts to avoid duplication of services, and focus on actual needs will be emphasized.
- Facilitators will not duplicate case management role.
- OCHS staff is teaching at Simmons, 4C's; faculty—recognition increasing New England-wide. Also collaborations with UMASS Nursing and Medical schools.

The next meeting, on 20 January 2021, will focus on review and discussion of the proposed budget. Kate will distribute the current financial spreadsheet to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Felice S. Coral